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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*A Manual for Writers.* Covering the Needs of Authors for Information on Rules of Writing and Practices in Printing. By JOHN MATHEWS MANLY and JOHN ARTHUR POWELL. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1913. Pp. viii+225. \$1.25 net.

In these days, when, as the publishers of books and the producers of plays assure us, every intelligent and fairly educated person—as well as some who have not these qualifications—has the manuscript of the great novel or epoch-making play either in preparation or else shuttling through the mails, a volume of information in regard to the technique of writing ought to meet with widespread interest. Especially ought this to be true in the case of Manly and Powell's *Manual for Writers*, for this is a book compiled by men who are qualified to speak with authority, the one on questions of propriety and usage, the other on the practice of publishers. It is free from the dogmatism and petty pedantry which so generally characterize the style-books of newspapers, magazines, and publishing houses. Upon points where usage is divided, the authors, as they have carefully pointed out in the Preface, have for the sake of uniformity and practical efficiency presented only a single form. Its great merit lies in the fact that it is authoritative. With a few minor exceptions which are practically negligible, its rules and precepts are unquestionable.

The book in its attempt at comprehensiveness covers three distinct fields. It has, of course, the merit of completeness, as a handbook of this sort should have; but not a few of its defects arise from what the writers themselves characterize as "the mania to tell it all." The first chapter on "English Composition" furnishes rather an introduction to the rest of the work. It is apparent that the authors were aware of the impossibility of saying anything new on such a subject to a student of writing in the space of twenty-five pages. On the other hand, they have not been content to confine themselves to giving sound practical precepts to the novice. In the efforts to interest both, they have written in a style which may be characterized as "the aim to hit it if it is a deer, miss it if it is a calf." Except for such pithy sayings as, "The effort to avoid common ideas often results in missing common-sense," "Excellence lives by sacrifice," and "A thought is not wholly born until it is expressed," the space might better have been given to other topics.

The second part, consisting of the next six chapters, deals with the problems of grammatical propriety and mechanical accuracy in writing. Were it not for the fact that the authors presuppose an appreciation of the value of accuracy and a desire to attain it, this portion might serve as an admirable text for college students. It is true that the chapters on punctuation and on

capitalization give merely rules to be followed, with little explanation of underlying principles; but one must remember that this is a manual, not a textbook. To anyone who has ever attempted to present similar material, the orderly arrangement of the complex mass of information shows the most painstaking skill.

In the chapter on "Grammatical Notes" there is included a list of words and phrases commonly misused. The list is so well chosen that, although it consists of only three hundred words, it includes most of the faults one has learned to look for in the manuscript of young writers. It is free, moreover, from the finical niceties of the purist. One can, therefore, only wonder the more at the inclusion of *demean* in the sense of "degrade," especially when such an authority as *The New English Dictionary* recognizes this use of the word.

The last five chapters answer the questions that arise in regard to the technical preparation of manuscript for publication. In the brief space of fifty pages it gives all the information necessary for an author in regard to type-forms, illustrations, proofreading, and the law of copyright. As the chapter on "Illustrations," contributed by Mr. A. C. McFarland, General Superintendent of the University of Chicago Press, presents material which is entirely new in handbooks of this sort, one can only regret that he did not give a more detailed explanation of the various processes and of their relative values.

Another feature both novel and valuable is the advice given in regard to the preparation of a careful index. Every person who has reason to refer to this book must give thanks that the authors practice what they preach. The index is a model.

The volume contains in concise form so much reliable information that every would-be author should have, that it ought to be recommended by readers for magazines and publishing houses, and by those harassed professors of English who are constantly appealed to by a perplexed public to decide questions of usage.

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*Jung Deutschland.* By ANNA T. GRONOW. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912.  
Pp. xvi + 264. \$0.90.

*Jung Deutschland* is a new type of textbook for the study of German that has come from the press within the last year. It is a type of book for which progressive teachers have searched the publishers' lists in vain so far, a textbook which is not only thoroughly adapted to the "direct method" of teaching modern languages but also a work which is unmistakably the result of careful modern classroom practice. It is the lack of a textbook possessing these qualifications that has so far made the successful teaching of German so difficult in our secondary schools.

The book consists of carefully prepared selections of reading-material,